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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 001855

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [KPKO](#) [CG](#) [UNSC](#)

SUBJECT: TSHISEKEDI GAMBIT WITH THE VISITING UNSC

Classified By: Ambassador Roger Meece. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

1. (C) A few days prior to the arrival in Kinshasa of the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) on November 5, two key officials of Etienne Tshisekedi's opposition UDPS party approached French Ambassador Georges Serres to request a meeting with the UNSC. (Note: The French PermRep was the UNSC's lead for the visit. End note). According to Serres in a subsequent briefing to members of the International Committee To Accompany the Transition (CIAT), the two indicated that the party was modifying its stance opposing the election process and was looking for a way to participate. They reported that party leader Tshisekedi was prepared to enter into a discussion without preconditions and passed along a draft document to be given to the UNSC. Subsequent reading of the document indicated that indeed there were preconditions, for example calling for a dialogue to fix a "realistic election calendar," asserting that the voter registration process and election planning to-date were invalid, and stating that the Transition government "1 4" formula (President plus four Vice Presidents) as established by the 2003 Sun City Accord needed to be replaced by a "classic schema." Serres reportedly told the UDPS reps that he could likely arrange a meeting with at least the delegation leader, the French PermRep, but it appeared the paper needed to be modified. The two indicated that it was still being revised.

2. (U) Tshisekedi did meet with French PermRep de la Sabliere at the French Ambassador's residence on Saturday evening, November 5, following the UNSC's arrival in Kinshasa. The Algerian UN PermRep also participated in the meeting, as did the British Ambassador. Tshisekedi handed over the UDPS position paper, reportedly slightly modified from the earlier draft. Tshisekedi's supporters had earlier staged a protest rally on the road from the airport, greeting the arriving UNSC with slogans. The Japanese Ambassador reported that his car was rocked a bit, but the demonstration was peaceful.

3. (C) The British and French Ambassadors told us that Tshisekedi and the UDPS members accompanying him at the

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Saturday meeting delivered a mixed message to the UNSC. On the one hand, there was expressed UDPS willingness to become involved in the election process. On the other hand, the UDPS members condemned the current process as invalid. The core idea of the UDPS initiative seemed to be to convene a broadly-based conference of political and other leaders to define a path forward. The conference as proposed, however, could potentially wreck the current election calendar and process, which was possibly the intent. The response from the PermReps was reportedly in essence that the UNSC would welcome UDPS full participation in elections, but the basic parameters of the process, including the December 18 constitutional referendum and general elections in the first half of 2006 had to be respected.

4. (C) Comment: Key members of the UDPS seem to recognize that the position taken by party leader Tshisekedi would lead them to a political dead end. These more moderate members of the party are trying to find a way out, but it does not appear that they have yet succeeded. Tshisekedi's willingness to go the French Ambassador's residence is a notable concession; Tshisekedi normally will not leave his Kinshasa residence and office. It appears, however, he is still trying to redefine a future process on his own terms. Tshisekedi's traditional position has been essentially that

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he must occupy a leadership position, as President or Prime Minister. The latter post does not exist in the Transition government structure; hence the UDPS draft paper's reference to the need for a replacement "traditional schema." The "unconditional talks" advanced by the two moderates did not square with either the paper or various remarks reportedly made in the Saturday meeting. It seems clear there are still differences within the UDPS party as to what the party should do. Having failed to stop the transition, the party's goal on June 30 of this year, UDPS leaders appear to be struggling to define a new position. We, along with other CIAT members, will continue to urge dialogue, but the options available to the UDPS become more limited as time passes, with no breakthrough possibilities yet visible. End comment.

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